

BROB D I N G N A G

 Brobdingnag #57 - 1966AQ (W'05) 11 April 1967

Game 1966AQ

NAVAL DOCKYARDS BUSY
 FLEETS LAUNCHED AT BREST AND ARCHANGEL

TRAGIC DEATH OF SULTAN
 PLAGUE RAGES IN LEVANT AND ITALY

Fall 1905

Erratum: The listing of supply centres shown on page 3 of BROB #56 failed to indicate that Rumania belongs to Russia. This should be inserted. The total shown is correct, as is the statement of permissible builds.

Winter 1905

The adjustments:

RUSSIA (Reinsel): Build fleet St. Petersburg, north coast.

FRANCE (Thompson): Build fleet Brest.

The gamesmaster would like to thank those players who sent in Spring moves. Not all did so. It is therefore necessary to set a deadline of Tuesday 25 April 1967 for moves for Spring 1906. However, the editor reserves the right to publish the Spring moves on or after the previously announced deadline, 15 April 1967, provided moves are received from all players.

NEWS RELEASES

Washington, D.C. 7 Dec. Reports from our consulate can now confirm the present disorders in Turkey and their nature. The armed forces have executed a coup d'etat. General Bewilderment was shot, as well as the Duke of Greenwich, on charges of being pro-French in their support of the attacks on England. On news of the disorders the Sultan immediately returned home from his tour of inspection of the Russian fronts.

The Dispatch went on to say, "At this time the Sultan was attacked by a case of botulism. The Sultan was dead within 24 hours. The favorite son, Abdul Osman, has not, as yet succeeded to the throne." The dispatch further said, "Turkey is being strangled by a plague which originated in Syria. Thousands of bloated bodies fill the countryside of all Asia Minor, the southern Balkans, and are believed to be the cause of the recent civil disorders in Italy."

Washington, D.C. 9 Dec. Money is already pouring in to relieve the suffering in Turkey from the plague which is widespread there.

Tsarskoe Selo, 10 Jan. In celebration of the Orthodox Christmas many soldiers from front line units have been brought here to be decorated by the Tsar personally. In a ringing speech before these representatives of the armed forces the Tsar stated: "Russia will continue her freeing of suppressed Italy! With Turkey's loyal help!"

Bern, 15 Feb. A spirit of gloom has settled over many in Switzerland, and it is hard to say whether government officials, the leaders of humanitarian societies, or hotel-owners are the most depressed. The meeting, proposed last summer by the Sultan of Turkey, for a meeting between himself, the Russian Tsar, and the German Kaiser, had sent a surge of hope through all three groups. Government leaders had hoped that this conference might be persuaded to widen its membership and become a true peace conference, and so end the disastrous war which is ruining the economy of the continent. The humanitarian societies, the International Red Cross, with headquarters in Geneva, leading the way, hoped to utilize the meeting to mitigate in some measure the harsh treatment which prisoners of war, especially in the east, have been exposed to. And the hotel owners had hoped that the conferences would do something to improve their financial position. Many of them have been nearly ruined as a result of the effect of the war on the normally prosperous tourist industry.

The hopes of all have been dashed. First there was the startling announcement of the overthrow of the government in Turkey. Followed very shortly by rumors of an epidemic spreading through all the regions bordering on the eastern half of the Mediterranean. The conference itself, of course, has been cancelled and there seems no hope of immediately reviving the idea. The epidemic will place still another burden on the shoulders of the various philanthropic and humanitarian organizations, whose facilities are already badly strained due to the war. Although officials maintain an optimistic front in public it is known that they feel that at least another year, and perhaps more, must elapse before a climate suitable for a major conference of the powers can be re-established. Two proud nations have already gone down to defeat; there are not wanting those who say that the same fate will befall others before a general peace can be arranged.

COUNTRY RATINGS

Jared Johnson, 1548 Rochelle Drive, Chamblee, Georgia, 30005, has conducted several polls among Avalon-Hill war gamers to determine the preferences of the majority of players as to the side they play in the various games. Last September he decided to do a similar survey of Diplomacy players to find country preferences. To that end he wrote to the majority of Diplomacy 'zines to get their co-operation in the project.

Returns were disappointing. There were in all only eleven replies. Preliminary results of the poll were given in a letter published in EROB #54. Jared has now gone over all returns received, and recalculated the points and has sent the results out to all 'zines which co-operated with him on the project. The results:

<u>Probability of Winning</u>		<u>Preferred Country</u>	
1.	Turkey 19.2%	1.	England 13
2.	France 18.5	2.	France 14
3.	England 15.8	3.	Germany 16
4.	Russia 14.9	4.	Russia 21
5.	Germany 11.7	5.	Austria-H. 22
6.	Austria-H. 10.7	6.	Turkey 23
7.	Italy 9.2	7.	Italy 31

In general the results are similar to those indicated in his letter, published earlier, except for a few refinements of percentage points. As Jared pointed out earlier there is quite good agreement between a player's expectation of a win with a country and his preference for playing it. The outstanding exception is Turkey whose potentialities are highly regarded but which players apparently dislike playing. Jared's explanation of this discrepancy is that Turkey tends to be isolated at the beginning of play so that there is less opportunity to conduct negotiations. Another possible explanation is that this survey was conducted among Postal players, among whom the propaganda side of the game is an important feature. Most of us are probably less familiar with Turkish history, literature and language, than we are with those of any of the other countries so that writing an alternate time track press release is more difficult for that country than it is for any other. There is a limit, after all, to what one can do with the two figures of Enver Pasha and Liman von Sanders. Among more purely war gamer type players the discrepancy in the position of Turkey in the two lists would likely be much less pronounced.

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SEALED BAG

Richard A. Shagrin, Room 356, Haggett Hall, U. of Washington, Seattle, Wash., 98105: Note in 1966AQ and 1966AV the first four countries out are the top four in your list ((given in EROB #56)) - Turkey, England, France, and Austria. Hum? Russia (17 forces) and Germany (14 forces) are now in the lead on the average.

((+(I think that there are two points here that should be noted. First, as has been pointed out by Dave Lebling in both issue #2 and issue #3 of GLOCKORLA, Turkey and England head all the lists but they have followed a different route in getting there. Turkey has only won two games, as have several other countries. It still tops the field because it very frequently is a strong survivor when it doesn't win. In fact, except when Russia and Austria gang up on Turkey from the opening move, it nearly always survives. England has won more games. But, in those games that it hasn't won, it has usually been eliminated. So that the elimination of England in AQ is not unheard of. Nor is Turkey's when it faces a joint Austro-Russian attack as it did in AV.

The second thing as pointed out by Charles Wells some time ago in LONELY MOUNTAIN is that 1966AV consisted, with the exception of Wells himself, entirely of those who were new to the Postal game when play began. In fact some were new to Diplomacy in any form. As a result, particularly in the test, play in that game has been far from typical, so that we need not be surprised at an atypical result. -jamcc+))

Dave Lebling, 3 Rollins Court, Rockville, Md., 20852: In case it might be of interest, I am including the country ratings for my system, as they would be if I used the same twelve games as you did for yours. ((+(Again, this refers to the item on country ratings in the last issue.))+

The reason my system listed England as surviving only once without winning is this: In my system a country is given a rating only if the same player plays it throughout (or if the replacement player humors me and says he wants the rating). In 64B, and 64D, England was, as you

know, played by replacement players for part of the game. You yourself have given good reasons for not rating stand-by players. So as a result, England has no rating in 64A, 64B, 64D, and 65T. The country is not even counted as having played.

In any event, my system is not basically a center-year system, except in the broadest sense. To find a rating you divide the change in centers owned by the change in time. Therefore a person who is eliminated in three years as Austria gets a rating of $-3/3$, and Austria sinks even lower. (Ratings are multiplied by 1000). There is a bonus of $1/2$ for winning, $1/4$ for a draw.

Here are the ratings for the countries using the same games you used as a base:

Turkey	+804.3
England	+423.8
Russia	+ 89.6
Austria	+ 69.7
France	+ 21.9
Germany	- 54.7
Italy	- 70.2

Put in simple language, this means that, on the average, Turkey gains about $8/10$ of a center per year, England about $5/7$, and so on down to Italy, which loses about $1/14$ per year. France, Austria, and Russia, are static because even France's rating, lowest of the three, means that France gains only about $1/40$ of a center per year, which ain't much.

I think it is very interesting to note that all the systems agree on the top two (in order), the bottom two, and have the greatest disparity in the center, still agreeing that it is darned crowded in there.

((+It seems to me that one must make a few differences in a personal rating list, and a country rating list. For example, in the EMOB personal rating list the two five-man games are counted. If Joe Blow does better than Conrad Rupprecht von und zu Schlossberg-über-Passau in a five man game, that is as significant as if he does the same thing in a seven man game. However, my country list throws out the two five man games because it is obvious that Austria is a very different thing in a game where it has two neighbours from that it is in a game with four. The relative strength of the towers in a five man game may be an interesting question but it is a different question from how they compare in the standard seven man game. To mix the two things up in a grand salad means that one can't answer either question.

It seems to me that the same thing applies, on the other side, in deciding what to do about the replacement players. In the personal rating list some systems assign all the points to the final player for a country. Charles Wells has suggested that all points should be assigned to the initial player. The usual centre-year system divides them up, proportionately to the time that the players concerned held the country. Some arbitrary decision must be made; your scheme of not giving any points to either the outgoing or the incoming player is probably just as good as any. However, it should apply to your personal rating list only, and not to the country list. If the country list is to mean anything it must count the achievement of every country in every game as if that country had been played by a single player

throughout. For instance, the Weinsel rating system gives a penalty of a point to any player who drops out of a game. Fair enough. But that penalty was not applied when I made up the country list corresponding to the Weinsel system which appeared in the last issue. The country didn't drop out, the player for it did. The country was just given the score appropriate to its final achievement, regardless of whether that country was, in fact, played by one player, by two, or by half a dozen. And, it seems to me, if your country rating list is to be fully comparable with the others, a similar rating of the country as a country, and not by the player(s) who happened to control it for a greater or longer length of time, will have to be used. Any chance of seeing such a rating of these 12 games in the next Clock?

As you say, it is remarkable how closely the various schemes parallel one another in ranking the countries. Particularly when one considers how very different are the principles upon which the various schemes are based. As more games are added there will undoubtedly be much jockeying for position among the middle powers. Italy may eventually surpass Germany. But other than that I suspect there will be no further changes in ranking.-(jamcc)+))

Charles Wells, 5678 Lindholm Road, Cleveland, Ohio, 44120, wrote a long and interesting letter about board positions. He used as examples a number of games now in progress which makes me hesitate to publish his letter. To have a game in which I am playing analyzed in print while it is in progress has much the same effect on me as do whispering kibitzers while I am playing chess. Therefore, regretfully, his letter won't appear here. His main point was that it is remarkable how often almost identical positions will arise in different games. He thinks that some of these will eventually have names, just as standard Chess openings do, with full analyses worked out in great detail for many of them. Charles, how about publishing it, in an expanded version, as an article in Lonely Mountain, just as soon as you can do so without disrupting a quarter of the games in progress?

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GAME OPENINGS : DIPLOMACY '21-'23

Diplomacy journals are listed below only if (1) they are known to have game openings, or (2) a correction is required to the information published in the last three issues of EMCB.

A DROITE & GAUCHE (13), Harold Maus, 283 Broadway, #139, Chula Vista, Calif., 92010. Hal has recently announced that he will not begin new games until a sizable fraction of the 15 or 16 he now has have ended. ADAG has acted as the Good Samaritan of southern California. Most of the California 'zines which have folded have turned to ADAG to pick up the pieces and continue their games. All of us who have had games in which we play so salvaged owe Hal our best thanks. In spite of the tremendous load thus thrown on it, ADAG has done a good job and we can only sympathize with its editor in wanting to wait until that load has been somewhat reduced before he takes on new games.

Big Brother, (30), Charles H. Reinsel, 120 8th Ave., Clarion, Penna., 16214. Big Brother and Graustark are now the only Diplomacy journals which appear regularly every two weeks. So, for anyone who likes a fast, prompt game, the one now forming in BB is the only real possibility open at present. Game fee \$4.

Cerebral Nebula (2), Greg Long, 3526 S. W. 112, Seattle, Wash., 98146. Its first game is rolling and it is looking for another. Game fee \$2.

Costaguana, Conrad F. von Metzke, 5327 Hilltop Drive, San Diego, Calif., 92114. Persistent, but second hand, rumor has it that it is to be revived.

Diplomania et filiae. Donald L. Miller, 12315 Judson Road, Wheaton, Md., 20906. Game openings both regular and variant. Fee \$3.

Erewhon, Capt. R. C. Walker, TUSLOG Det. #183, APO, New York City, 09254. Openings, especially for Peloponnesian War variant. Fee \$2.

Euralia, Jim Sanders, Rm., 3K4, 601 West 110th St., NYC, 10025. Game openings. Fee \$2.50

Glockoria, (3), Dave Lebling, 3 Rollins Court, Rockville, Md., 20852. Game openings. Fee \$3.

Kalmar, Christina Cartier/Brannen, 3044A Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, Calif., 94705. Game openings. \$4.

Lonely Mountain, Charles Wells, 3678 Lindholm, Cleveland, Ohio. 44120. The last I heard there was still one opening for the game to be run by Al Scott.

Marsovia, (13), Bob Ward, 2631 27th St., Sacramento, Calif., 95818. Has resumed publication.

sTab, John Moning, 316 South Belle Vista, Youngstown, Ohio, 44509, will publish a new three man team game variant, suggested by Derek Nelson. This game was full four days after the issue announcing its formation was published. Confirming what I said two issues ago: if you want to play in sTab best subscribe so that you have the earliest possible word of openings.

Xeno, Steve Cartier/Dan Brannen, Address as under Kalmar. Openings for a Space War variant. Fee \$2.

Xenogogic, Lawrence Peery, 5834 Estelle St., San Diego, Calif, 92115. Openings. Fee \$2. There are a few free places for new players.

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